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Implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015) and 2332 (2016)

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is the forty-fifth submitted pursuant to paragraph 17 of Security Council resolution 2139 (2014), paragraph 10 of resolution 2165 (2014), paragraph 5 of resolution 2191 (2014), paragraph 5 of resolution 2258 (2015) and paragraph 5 of resolution 2332 (2016), in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to report, every 30 days, on the implementation of the resolutions by all parties to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic.

2. The information contained herein is based on data available to agencies of the United Nations system and from the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as from other Syrian and open sources. Data from agencies of the United Nations system on their humanitarian deliveries have been reported for the period from 1 to 31 October 2017.

II. Major developments

Box 1
Key points in October 2017

1. Military activities and instances of significant military escalation that were reported in September continued to be reported in many areas, in particular activities targeting Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) areas in the Governorates of Dayr al-Zawr and Raqqah, as well as in Idlib Governorate and the eastern Ghutah enclave in Rif Dimashq Governorate.

Inputs provided from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Children's Fund, the International Organization for Migration, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the United Nations Population Fund, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Nations Mine Action Service, the Department of Political Affairs and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat.

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2. In eastern Ghutah, severe shortages of food supplies and a sharp increase in the prices of basic commodities were reported. The United Nations also received alarming reports that children in besieged eastern Ghutah were suffering from severe acute malnutrition, and that an estimated 400 people with health problems urgently required medical assistance and evacuations.

3. On 17 October, the Syrian Democratic Forces announced that Raqqah city had been fully retaken from ISIL after months of intense air strikes and fighting, amid reports of scores of civilian casualties, significant damage to the city's basic infrastructure and the displacement of nearly all civilians from the city. The presence of explosive remnants of war across the city remains a major concern for the protection of civilians and their eventual safe return, and is hampering access of humanitarian partners to Raqqah city.

4. Military operations in Dayr al-Zawr Governorate continued to impact civilians despite the announcement by Syrian Government forces that they had broken the ISIL-imposed siege on parts of Dayr al-Zawr city last month. In October alone, some 270,000 people were displaced from Dayr al-Zawr Governorate according to the displacement monitoring tracker of the United Nations and its partners, mostly to other parts of Dayr al-Zawr Governorate, but also to Raqqah, Aleppo and Hasakah Governorates. Many of those who remained in Dayr al-Zawr could not be reached with humanitarian assistance owing to the proximity of the fighting or as areas continued to be under ISIL control.

5. On 12 October, the only vaccine cold room in Mayadin district, Dayr al-Zawr Governorate, was reportedly damaged by an airstrike, resulting in the destruction of over 135,000 doses of United Nations-provided measles and polio vaccines. This represents a setback for the response to the polio outbreak in the area. The United Nations received credible reports of three further attacks that impacted health-care facilities and personnel in October.

6. In October, the United Nations reached millions of people in need with humanitarian assistance from within Syria, including some 2,793,440 people who received food assistance through regular deliveries. 797,700 people were reached through cross-border convoys and 199,000 people were reached through five humanitarian inter-agency cross-line convoys. Humanitarian inter-agency cross-line convoys reached 41,500 people in the besieged locations of Qabun, Kafr Batna and Saqba in Rif Dimashq Governorate, out of a total of 419,920 people besieged in the Syrian Arab Republic.

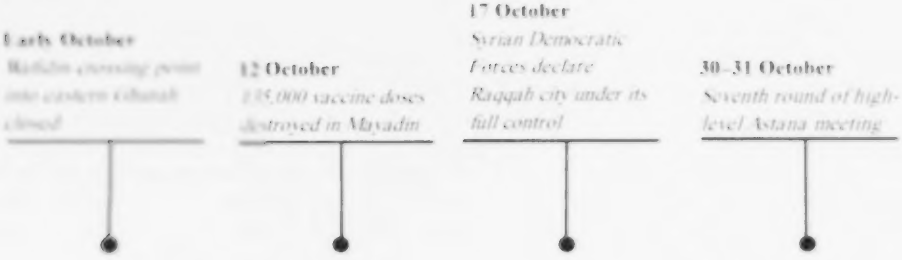
3. On 26 October, the Special Envoy for Syria announced his intention to convene the eighth round of the intra-Syrian talks in Geneva on 28 November. He noted that talks should focus on the schedule and process for drafting a new constitution, as well as on the precise requirements for United Nations-supervised elections in accordance with Security Council resolution 2254 (2015). In support of the intra-Syrian talks, the Special Envoy continued to stress that existing de-escalation and ceasefire arrangements being discussed in Astana should be strengthened, while ensuring that serious and concrete steps are taken to increase humanitarian access, and to further advance on the issues of detainees, abductees and missing persons and humanitarian mine action. At their meeting in Astana on 30 and 31 October, the guarantors of the memorandum on de-escalation of 4 May — the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and Turkey — emphasized progress in the fight against terrorism and underlined that the Syrian conflict had no military solution and should be solved only through a political process in line with resolution 2254 (2015).

4. The implementation of the de-escalation and de-confliction areas continued to face challenges in reducing violence. Fighting in these areas, and across Syria, continued to affect civilians and civilian infrastructure, such as schools and hospitals. Throughout the reporting period, fighting continued in the Governorates of Damascus, Rif Dimashq, Hama, Dar'a, Qunaytirah, Aleppo, Idlib, Homs, Ladhiqiyah, Raqqah and Dayr al-Zawr.

5. In Rif Dimashq Governorate, fighting, ground-based strikes and air strikes continued in the eastern Ghutah enclave, where almost 400,000 civilians remained besieged by Syrian Government forces, representing nearly 95 per cent of all those besieged across Syria. Civilians in eastern Ghutah are facing gravely deteriorating conditions. A recent World Food Programme (WFP) assessment reported severe shortages of food supplies and a sharp increase in the prices of basic commodities, further eroding coping mechanisms. The cost of a standard food basket in October was almost 10 times higher than the national average. The United Nations also received alarming reports indicating that children in the besieged enclave are suffering from severe acute malnutrition, and that an estimated 400 people urgently require evacuation as there is no adequate medical assistance available in the area.

6. Fierce fighting continued between Government forces and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in the Governorates of Hama, Homs, Dayr al-Zawr and Raqqah, where Government forces captured Mayadin city on 14 October. The Syrian Democratic Forces, backed by the United States-led international counter-ISIL coalition and led by the Kurdish People's Protection Units (Yekîneyên Parastina Gel, or YPG), announced on 17 October that Raqqah city had been fully retaken from ISIL. This announcement came after months of intensified airstrikes and heavy shelling had reportedly resulted in hundreds of civilian deaths, widespread destruction of homes and basic infrastructure and the displacement of nearly all civilians from the city. The Syrian Democratic Forces, backed by the United States-led international counter-ISIL coalition, also continued to advance against ISIL in Raqqah, Hasakah and Dayr al-Zawr Governorates. Fighting between non-State armed opposition groups and ISIL was reported in Dar'a province with no significant changes in frontlines. Fighting continued in Hama province, where non-State armed opposition groups again reduced the footprint of ISIL in the area. Explosive weapons continue to be fired into populated areas, indiscriminately killing and injuring people, destroying and damaging vital infrastructure and leaving thousands of communities in areas littered with explosive remnants of war that continued to kill and injure civilians and impede humanitarian access years after their intended use. The use of improvised explosive devices in certain areas adds to the complexity of the explosive hazard threat.

Figure I
Key dates in October 2017


1 and 5 October
Rukban crossing point into eastern Ghutah closed
12 October
135,000 vaccine doses destroyed in Mayadin
17 October
Syrian Democratic Forces declare Raqqah city under its full control
30–31 October
Seventh round of high-level Astana meeting

Box 2
United Nations response to polio outbreak in Syria

1. A polio outbreak began in the first half of 2017 and has continued to spread throughout the year. Some 63 children have been diagnosed with the virus, most (60 cases) in Dayr al-Zawr Governorate, with three cases reported in Raqqah and Homs Governorates. The median age of those infected is 15 months old.

2. Before the onset of the Syrian humanitarian crisis in 2011, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic was procuring all its vaccine requirements. Following a first outbreak in 2013, the Government, together with the United Nations and non-governmental organizations, undertook multiple vaccination campaigns, as part of a broad effort to increase resistance to the debilitating virus. Unlike the first wild outbreak in 2013, the current outbreak is a circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type-2 (cVDPV2). Such viruses are extremely rare, but can occur in instances when population immunity against polio is very low; this is often a result of compromised access to immunization services.

3. Since the outbreak there has been a concerted effort by the United Nations, led by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), in coordination with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and local authorities, to carry out a strategic response to swiftly stop cVDPV2 transmission. Two mass vaccination rounds have been carried out in Dayr al-Zawr and Raqqah Governorates, reaching resident, refugee and internally displaced children. More than 255,000 children were reported vaccinated in Dayr al-Zawr and more than 140,000 reported vaccinated in Raqqah.

4. Campaign implementation in affected areas has not been without significant challenges, and this achievement has relied on strong coordination between all response partners. In addition to vaccination against polio, surveillance for acute flaccid paralysis, a major indicator for the disease, continues around the country, particularly where infections have been reported.

7. The United Nations has not been able to verify first-hand the situation in Raqqah, owing to lack of access but has received reports that most of the city has been damaged or destroyed as a result of the fighting. Humanitarian actors have not had access to the city in view of the continuation of military operations and the presence of explosive remnants of war. The city is reportedly littered with a complex array of explosive hazards, including unexploded ordnance, landmines and improvised explosive devices that pose a direct risk to civilians and humanitarian workers. There are reports that thousands of people have been allowed to return to certain parts of Raqqah city and its surroundings after the Syrian Democratic Forces declared specific areas to be safe following unexploded ordnance clearance operations.

8. Meanwhile, the United Nations continues to provide humanitarian assistance to people in need in camps and across Raqqah and Hasakah Governorates where there is a high concentration of internally displaced persons, wherever and whenever access permits. Since the beginning of the anti-ISIL offensive in Raqqah in November 2016, more than 436,000 people have been displaced within and from Raqqah Governorate. The United Nations and its partners are reaching 450,000 people in need across the north-eastern part of the Syrian Arab Republic each month, including 56,000 people in 48 camps and temporary shelters in Raqqah, Hasakah, Aleppo and Dayr al-Zawr Governorates. Reports of recruitment of fighters by the People's Protection Units (YPG) in internally displaced person camps in the

north-east of the country, including the recruitment of children and adolescents, have continued. Four cases of child recruitment, including two of unaccompanied minors, have been identified in the last two months.

9. Military operations in Dayr al-Zawr Governorate continued to affect civilians. In mid-October, in Mayadin city and surrounding areas in rural Dayr al-Zawr Governorate, around 15,000 people were reportedly without access to health services following air strikes on the city, rendering hospitals and medical points inoperative. Overall, air strikes and clashes resulted in the displacement of 270,000 people (according to the displacement monitoring tracker of the United Nations and its partners), mostly to other parts of Dayr al-Zawr Governorate and also to Raqqah and Hasakah Governorates. Many of those who remain in Dayr al-Zawr cannot be reached owing to the proximity of the fighting or because areas continue to be under ISIL control. Most of those who fled north into Raqqah and Hasakah Governorates are arriving at reception areas for security screening by the Syrian Democratic Forces, before moving onwards to camps such as those in Ayn Isa or Arishah in Raqqah and Hasakah Governorates, respectively. While humanitarian partners are responding in these locations, additional support is needed, in particular at the reception areas where thousands of people are gathered while awaiting security screening.

10. In Homs Governorate, ISIL fighters carried out a ground offensive into Government-controlled areas east of Tadmur (Palmyra) and south of Sukhnah in early October. Following an ISIL attack on the Government-controlled Qaryatayn town in late September, heavy clashes reportedly killed 23 civilians. About 11,000 people reportedly remain in the area, without adequate supplies of water and food.

11. In Idlib Governorate, fighting, ground-based strikes and air strikes continued to affect civilians. Attempts by Hay'at Tahrir Al-Sham, led by Jabhat Fath al Sham (former Nusrah Front), designated as a terrorist organization by the Security Council, to interfere in civil governance and the provision of humanitarian aid in the Governorate also impacted civilians. While humanitarian assistance was not affected during the reporting period, there are concerns that onerous requests, such as specific limitations on procurement of goods could result in limited ability to reach those in need. As part of the de-escalation zones agreed among the Astana co-guarantors, Turkish armed forces were deployed as of mid-October to be stationed at observation posts in parts of Idlib.

12. During the reporting period, an estimated 50,000–55,000 Syrians remained stranded along the Syrian-Jordanian border, in the area known as the berm. The last cycle of partial aid assistance to this area was halted over four months ago, on 15 June, with the food security and health situation of many of those stranded, notably children, having continuously deteriorated. The United Nations has continued to urgently call for emergency humanitarian access to make possible the delivery of food and essential non-food assistance in the immediate term, while longer-term solutions for this population are pursued. Meanwhile, critical health assistance and water supplies continue to be provided from the Jordanian side of the berm to this community.

Protection

13. Air and ground-based strikes continued to kill and injure civilians in significant numbers throughout the month. Explosive weapons continue to be fired into populated areas, indiscriminately killing and injuring people, destroying and damaging vital infrastructure and leaving thousands of communities in areas littered with explosive remnants of war that continue to kill and injure civilians and impede humanitarian access years after their intended use. The large number of civilian

casualties remains a strong indication that violations of the prohibition on launching indiscriminate attacks and of the principles of proportionality and precaution are continuing. Children are particularly affected by the fighting and, in some incidents, have constituted the majority of the casualties.

14. Fighting continued to affect civilian infrastructure, including medical facilities, schools, markets and places of worship. On the basis of information received by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), civilian casualties occurred in various governorates (see annex), in possible violation of international humanitarian law. OHCHR has documented alleged incidents perpetrated by many parties to the conflict, including Government forces and their allies, non-State armed opposition groups and Security Council-designated terrorist groups.

15. In addition, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic provided OHCHR with information on alleged violations. In a note verbale received on 3 November, the Permanent Mission of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations provided OHCHR with a list of reported casualties and injured civilians between 22 September and 21 October in Damascus, Rif Dimashq, Dar'a, Suwayda', Homs, Hama, Tartus, Ladhiqiyah, Idlib, Aleppo, Dayr al-Zawr, Hasakah, Qunaytirah, and Raqqah. A total of 61 civilians, 15 of them children, were reported to have been killed and 238 injured, including 73 children. The casualties were reported to have been the result of mortars and explosive devices.

16. Despite the call made to the Syrian authorities in Human Rights Council resolution 19/22 to cooperate with OHCHR, including through the establishment of a field presence with the mandate to protect and promote human rights, further reporting by the Office remains curtailed by the denial of access for it to the Syrian Arab Republic.

17. The United States Department of Defense publicly confirmed that, in October, the United States-led coalition carried out 495 strikes against ISIL targets in the Governorates of Hasakah, Raqqah and Dayr al-Zawr. Nearly 75 per cent of the strikes (or 371 air strikes) were reported to have been in the vicinity of Raqqah city and 21 per cent in Dayr al-Zawr. In addition, the United States Department of Defense reported that the coalition had conducted airstrikes near Mayadin on 2 and 3 October, near Hajin on 3 October, and near Albu Kamal on 9 October.

18. The Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation issued a statement on 13 October noting that there had been intensified airstrikes on Dayr al-Zawr Governorate, with Russian aircraft carrying out 383 sorties which hit 993 targets in Dayr al-Zawr Governorate over the previous week. They further noted that three large-scale strikes had been launched using both sea- and air-launched cruise missiles over the month.

19. The United Nations and its health partners received credible reports of four attacks that affected health-care facilities and personnel in October, of which two have been verified. On 6 October, an attack on Shifa' primary health care centre in Duma, Rif Dimashq, resulted in damage to the facility building, as well as damage to at least one ambulance. The facility went out of service. On 12 October, the World Health Organization (WHO) received reports of an attack that destroyed the only vaccines cold room in Mayadin district, Dayr al-Zawr Governorate. More than 100,000 doses of measles vaccines and 35,000 doses of polio vaccines were stored in the facility, together with equipment, syringes and stocks for all vaccine-preventable childhood diseases. This is a setback for efforts to control the polio outbreak in the area, with new cases continuing to be reported.

20. Educational facilities also continued to be affected by the fighting. Reports of attacks on or around schools in late October in Rif Dimashq Governorate, in Kafr Batna on 16 and 29 October, and in Jisrayn and Misraba on 31 October, allegedly resulted in the deaths of several children.

21. On 16 October, demonstrations broke out inside Homs Central Prison following an attempt by the security forces to raid a wing overrun by the protestors. On 21 October, the governor and police chief of Homs Governorate visited the prison and met with the detainees who had been on hunger strike since the demonstrations began. The authorities agreed that judicial bodies would visit the facility to examine the relevant pending cases; that cases sentenced under the now-abolished Supreme State Security Court would be reviewed; and that the detainees' cases would be brought to the attention of the President. The detainees agreed to immediately suspend their hunger strike and their demonstrations for at least seven days.

Humanitarian access

Box 3

Key points for humanitarian access

1. In October, United Nations humanitarian agencies and partners continued to reach millions of people in need through all available access modalities, including from within the Syrian Arab Republic, in cooperation with the Syrian authorities. Regular programming from within the country resulted in the delivery of humanitarian assistance to millions of people in need, including some 2,793,440 people who received food assistance during the month through more than 1,575 deliveries.

2. In October, five humanitarian inter-agency cross-line convoys delivered much-needed assistance to 199,000 people. The total number of people reached under the October–November plan through 31 October was 110,000 or 9.1 per cent of the overall number of people to whom access was originally requested under the plan. In October, humanitarian inter-agency cross-line convoys reached 41,500 people in the besieged locations of Qabun, Kafr Batna and Saqba in Rif Dimashq Governorate, out of a total of 419,920 besieged nationwide.

3. Cross-border activities remain a vital part of the humanitarian response in the Syrian Arab Republic. Since the adoption of Security Council resolution 2165 (2014) in July 2014, assistance has been delivered from Turkey to millions of Syrians in various parts of Aleppo, Idlib, Ladhiqiyah and Hama Governorates, and from Jordan to Dar'a, Qunaytirah and Suwayda' Governorates. In October, 420 trucks in 20 convoys delivered much-needed life-saving assistance to more than 797,700 people in need in northern and southern areas of the Syrian Arab Republic.

4. The removal and delisting of medical supplies from inter-agency cross-line convoys remained a major challenge, with supplies sufficient for more than 12,195 treatments removed or not allowed to be loaded in October (see table 2). This brings the total number of medical items removed or not allowed to be loaded to more than 630,000 since the beginning of the year.

22. The delivery of humanitarian assistance to people in need remained extremely challenging in many areas of the country as a result of active conflict, shifting conflict lines, administrative impediments and deliberate restrictions imposed on the movement of people and goods by the parties to the conflict. In particular, access by the United Nations and its partners to those people living in besieged and hard-to-reach locations remains a critical concern.

23. The United Nations inter-agency convoy plan for October and November requested access to 33 locations in besieged and hard-to-reach areas, seeking to reach 1,206,000 people. Inter-agency convoys are prepared for areas with multi-sectoral needs where access is limited, to ensure that United Nations support is needs based. In October, only five inter-agency convoys could be dispatched to besieged and hard-to-reach locations, reaching 199,000 people in need (see table 1 for a list of inter-agency convoys sent in October). Four of these deliveries were under the October–November plan, reaching some 110,000 people; the 5 October delivery to Hulah, Homs Governorate, and Harbinafsih, Hama Governorate (reaching 89,000 people) was a delayed delivery under the August-September plan. The total number of people reached under the October–November plan to 31 October is 110,000, or 9.1 per cent of the overall number of people to whom access was originally requested under the bimonthly plan. That number does not include convoys carrying supplies delivered by other humanitarian actors.

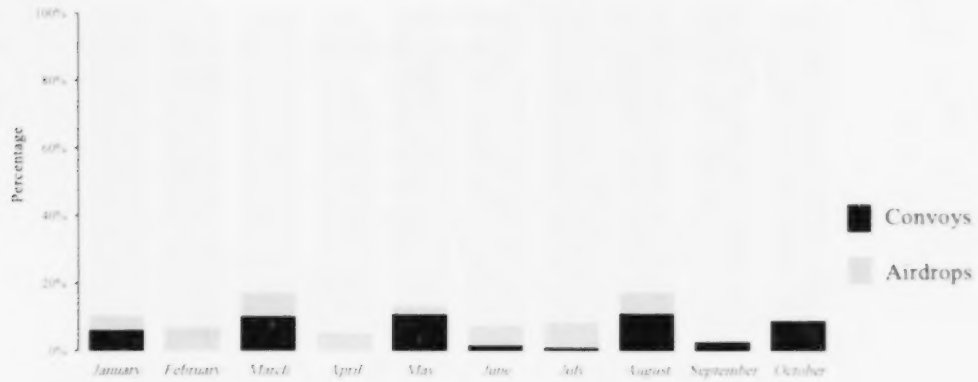
Table 1
Inter-agency cross-line humanitarian convoys in October 2017

Date	*Location*	*Requested target (number of beneficiaries)*	*Number of beneficiaries reached*	*Type of assistance*
5 October	Hulah and Harbinafsih	89 000	89 000	Multisectoral
15 October	Qabun	1 500	1 500	Multisectoral
19 October	Dar al-Kabirah, Ghantu, Tayr Ma'lah	40 250	33 500	Multisectoral
26 October	Yalda, Babila, Bayt Saham	57 200	35 000	Multisectoral
30 October	Kafr Batna and Saqba	93 000	40 000	Multisectoral

24. Individual agencies continued to submit requests for single-agency deliveries during the reporting period to locations throughout the country. Single-agency deliveries are undertaken in areas where access is possible; there are therefore fewer concerns about the ability of the United Nations to address assessed needs in those areas. In October, WFP submitted 1,575 official requests to the authorities to obtain facilitation letters for the transport of food assistance to locations throughout the country, all of which were approved. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees submitted 65 facilitation letters for the movement of core relief items and livelihood kits, of which 62 were approved and 3 not, citing security concerns. Both international and Syrian non-governmental organizations continued to undertake needs assessments and to provide support (including medical, educational, psychosocial and protection services) in besieged and hard-to-reach locations, under extremely challenging circumstances and in accordance with humanitarian principles.

Figure II

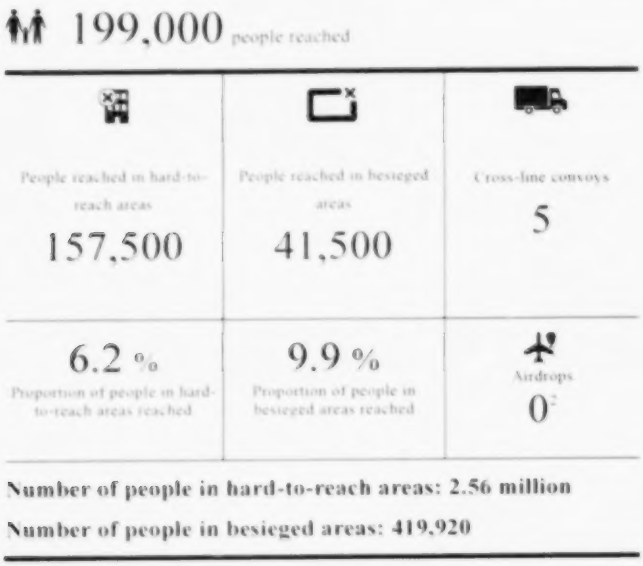
United Nations inter-agency cross-line humanitarian operations: percentage of people reached each month in besieged areas



25. Humanitarian access continues to face restrictions by parties to the conflict in besieged and hard-to-reach locations. On average in 2017, only 26 per cent of beneficiaries scheduled for assistance under specific requests have been reached through inter-agency cross-line convoys each month. Bureaucratic impediments, such as non-issuance of facilitation letters by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, continue to be a significant factor in these delays or non-deliveries, despite the creation of a tripartite coordination mechanism to address such problems. Access was also restricted by non-State armed opposition groups for United Nations staff on convoy to Yalda (Damascus Governorate) on 26 October, who were not granted the security guarantees necessary to travel. This meant that critical assessments could not be conducted. During the reporting cycle, the majority of agencies of the United Nations system and United Nations partners continued to be unable to gain access to the populations in need in areas of the country still controlled by ISIL.

26. Land deliveries to the north-eastern governorates via the Aleppo-Manbij route proceeded in a regular manner in October. Through those deliveries, the United Nations provided food and nutrition assistance to over 380,000 people in Hasakah and Raqqah Governorates, as well as to accessible parts of north-western Dayr al-Zawr Governorate. The United Nations and its partners have been responding at scale to the needs, providing assistance to displaced persons and host communities in 60 sites, camps and/or areas of high concentrations of internally displaced persons in Raqqah, Aleppo, Hasakah and Dayr al-Zawr Governorates.

Figure III
United Nations inter-agency cross-line humanitarian operations, October 2017



27. Life-saving and life-sustaining medical items sufficient for more than 12,195 treatments were rejected or removed from convoys in October by the Syrian authorities, according to WHO. Details regarding the treatments and supplies removed are shown in table 2. Additional medical supplies were scheduled to be delivered as part of the bimonthly inter-agency convoy plan; however, only five inter-agency convoys were able to proceed in October. Since the beginning of 2017, WHO has submitted 10 single-agency requests to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to gain access to 14 locations in six governorates. The Government has approved nine requests and one has been rejected.

Table 2
Medical supplies removed from humanitarian convoys in October 2017

Location	*Number of treatments*	*Types of supplies*
Hulah and Harbinafsih	3 412	Phenobarbitone, amitriptyline hydrochloride, haloperidol, gastro-resistant sodium valproate, ketamine hydrochloride injection, carbamazepine, beclomethasone dipropionate nasal spray, atracurium
Kafr Batna and Saqba	5 720	Psychotropic medicine or medicines for common symptoms in palliative care (valproic acid, carbamazepine, haloperidol tablets, phenobarbitone), medical consumables (syringes, intravenous catheter, sterile surgical gloves), medical supplies (including Sphygmomanometer, scale, N95 mask, safety box for used syringes), medical kits such as pneumonia kits A and B, trauma kits, emergency health kits and surgical supply kits, medical equipment, including ultrasound system, oxygen concentrator-sterilizer, bench-top, hot-air surgical cautery device, ventilator for adults, portable x-ray machine, autoclave mobile x-ray system

[1] Airdrop operations to Dayr al-Zawr city were discontinued in early September, as military developments enabled the United Nations and its partners to resume land access.

Location	Number of treatments	Types of supplies
Dar al-Kabirah	603	Tetracycline hydrochloride, ketamine hydrochloride, oxytocin, atracurium besylate
Yalda, Babila, Bayt Saham	2 460	Medical equipment such as water bath, diagnostic ultrasound system, minor surgery instruments, surgical supply kits, stainless steel instruments for minor surgery, medicine such as analgesic, pneumonia kits, antihypertensive, anti-epileptic

Humanitarian response

28. In October, United Nations humanitarian agencies and partners continued to reach millions of people in need through all available access modalities, including (a) regular programming from within the Syrian Arab Republic, whereby humanitarian deliveries reach those in need without crossing conflict lines, (b) cross-line convoys, whereby assistance from inside the country is delivered across conflict lines, and (c) cross-border deliveries, whereby assistance is provided to those in need from Jordan and Turkey (see table 3). In addition to the United Nations and its partners, non-governmental organizations continued to deliver life-saving assistance to people in need. The Government continued to provide basic services both in areas under its control and in many areas beyond its control. Local authorities in many areas controlled by non-State armed opposition groups also continued to provide services, when possible.

Table 3
People reached by the United Nations and other organizations through all modalities in October 2017

Organization	Number of people reached
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	9 780
International Organization for Migration	44 556
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	2 705 976
United Nations Children's Fund	6 000 000
United Nations Development Programme	461 818
United Nations Population Fund	370 900
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	216 703
World Food Programme	3 560 000
World Health Organization	396 662

29. During the reporting period, cross-border deliveries continued from Turkey and Jordan into the Syrian Arab Republic under the terms of Security Council resolutions 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015) and 2332 (2016) (see figure IV). In line with those resolutions, the United Nations notified the Syrian authorities in advance of each shipment, including its content, destination and number of beneficiaries.

30. Since cross-border operations began in July 2014, following the adoption of resolution 2165 (2014), the United Nations has conducted more than 663 cross-border consignments, with more than 16,844 trucks (11,854 via Bab al-Hawa and 1,596 via Bab al-Salam from Turkey; and 3,394 via Ramtha from Jordan). The United Nations cross-border operations complement the critical role played by

international and Syrian non-governmental organizations that provide assistance and services to millions more from neighbouring countries.

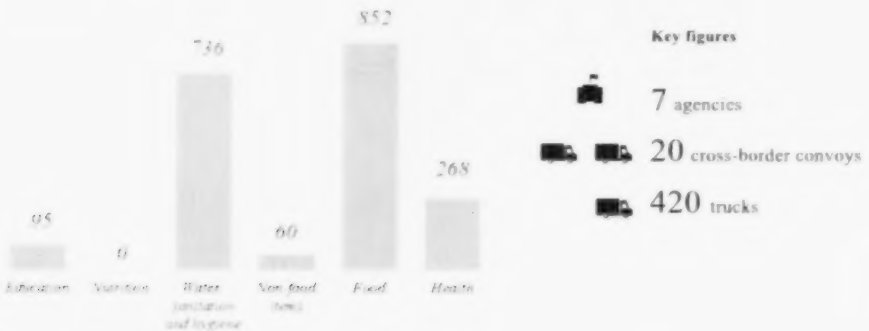
31. In October, for example, the United Nations and its implementing partners delivered food assistance for more than 797,700 people through cross-border deliveries from Turkey and Jordan. In October, WHO in Gaziantep conducted two cross-border deliveries (one via Bab al-Hawa and one via Bab al-Salam) providing supplies for 9 health care facilities and 80,567 beneficiaries. More than 546,600 people in the southern Syrian Arab Republic benefited from improved access to clean water through maintenance operations of water and sanitation systems. In addition, United Nations nutrition partners continued to provide services to more than 56,000 beneficiaries.

32. The United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic continued its operations during the reporting cycle, monitoring 420 trucks used in 20 consignments by seven United Nations entities in October, confirming the humanitarian nature of each and notifying the Syrian authorities after each shipment. The Mechanism continued to benefit from the excellent cooperation of the Governments of Jordan and Turkey. Mechanism monitoring is further supported by additional monitoring mechanisms in place for the delivery of cross-border assistance. The United Nations provides 48-hour notice to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic for all shipments. Once in the country, the United Nations partners that deliver aid ensure that shipments arrive at warehouses. Independent third-party companies contracted by the United Nations ensure independent verification of the assistance arriving at the warehouses and further monitor the distribution and/or service provision of the assistance.

Figure IV

Number of beneficiaries assisted by the United Nations and its partners by cluster through cross-border humanitarian deliveries, October 2017

(Thousands)



33. During the reporting period, WHO, UNICEF and their implementing partners launched a national polio vaccination from 8 to 12 October, targeting 2,738,323 children under 5 years of age. In total, 2,136,759 children under 5 were reached, representing a coverage rate of 78 per cent. The United Nations Fund for Population Activities was able to reach 370,900 people in Syria, including 27,992 in hard-to-reach areas, with sexual and reproductive health services.

34. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) began its fourth and final round of cash distribution for 2017 on 22 October and it is expected to conclude in the first week of December. By 31 October, 145,865 Palestine refugees had received cash assistance out of the

418,000 targeted beneficiaries. The third round of UNRWA food assistance delivery is still ongoing and is expected to conclude in November. During October, 39,139 food parcels were distributed, benefiting 61,639 Palestine refugees across the country.

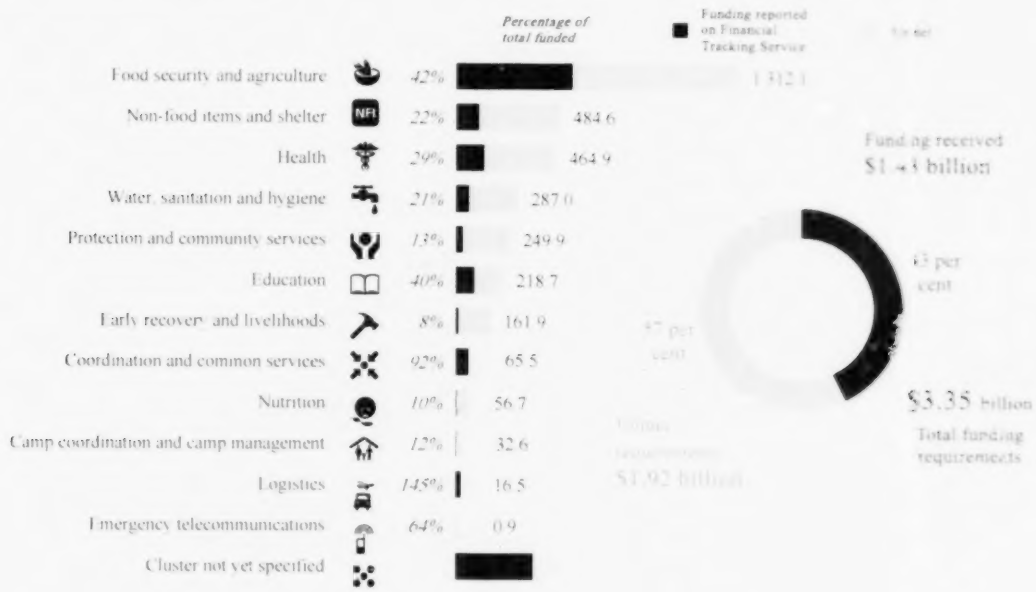
35. Throughout October, the Russian Federation sent information bulletins to the United Nations from the Russian Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic, which outlined the provision of bilateral relief assistance. Other Member States also continued to provide bilateral and other forms of humanitarian assistance.

Humanitarian financing

36. As at 1 November, the humanitarian response plan for the Syrian Arab Republic was 43 per cent funded, with $1.43 billion of the requested $3.35 billion received under the plan.

Figure V
Humanitarian response plan funding, 31 October 2017

(Millions of United States dollars)



Visas and registrations

37. A total of 49 new United Nations visa requests were submitted to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic in October. Of those, 27 were approved in October, 3 were denied and 19 remain pending. Of the 485 new visa applications submitted in earlier months, 43 were approved in October and 5 were denied. A total of 60 United Nations visa renewal requests were submitted in October, of which 39 were approved and 21 remain pending. An additional 620 requests for visa renewals were submitted in earlier months; all were approved.

38. A total of 23 international non-governmental organizations are registered with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to operate in the country. Some 220 national non-governmental organizations are authorized by the Syrian Arab Republic to operate through 315 branches countrywide.

Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and premises

39. Programmes of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes are implemented in areas affected by frequent clashes among belligerents, airstrikes, regular exchange of indirect artillery fire and asymmetric attacks. ISIL is also increasingly reverting to carrying out asymmetric attacks.

40. On 1 October and 15 October, the UNRWA distribution centre in Damascus was hit with mortars, damaging part of the infrastructure, including the roof and the guard's booth. No casualties were reported.

41. Since the start of the conflict, dozens of humanitarian workers have been killed, including 21 staff members of the United Nations or agencies of the United Nations system, of whom 17 were UNRWA staff members, 66 were staff members and volunteers of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and 8 were staff members and volunteers of the Palestine Red Crescent Society. Many staff members of international and national non-governmental organizations are also reported to have been killed.

42. A total of 28 staff members of agencies and programmes of the United Nations system (1 staff member of the United Nations Development Programme and 27 UNRWA staff members) are detained or missing.

III. Observations

43. I remain concerned that, despite the creation of de-escalation zones and intense effort by some countries to reduce the level of violence, violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law continue to be reported month after month, causing harm to civilians and damage to civilian objects throughout the country.

44. I once again call on all parties to the conflict to take constant care to spare civilians and civilian infrastructure and to comply with all their other obligations under international humanitarian law. I remind all Member States of their obligation to ensure that the parties that they support on the ground also comply with international humanitarian law.

45. Beyond the violence and insecurity limiting humanitarian access, administrative restrictions by all parties to the conflict continue to impede humanitarian access. These restrictions directly hinder the ability of the United Nations and its partners to deliver lifesaving assistance to those in need.

46. I reiterate my call for the renewal of Security Council resolution 2165 (2014) and subsequent resolutions, pursuant to which the United Nations provides a vital lifeline of assistance to those in need across northern and southern parts of the country. The United Nations does not have an alternative form of delivery that can replicate the reach of its cross-border activity, particularly as cross-line convoys continue to be hindered from reaching those most in need. Improved access through cross-line convoys is critical to ensure that the severe and worsening situation of civilians, including children, as observed by the United Nations in eastern Ghutah, is brought to an end.

47. It is critical that assistance continues to be delivered through all possible modalities, through regular deliveries providing aid within the Syrian Arab Republic, through convoys providing aid across conflict lines and through cross-border assistance in vast areas across the northern and southern parts of the country. Without any one of these operations, civilian suffering will increase. International humanitarian law requires all parties to the conflict to allow and facilitate rapid and

unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need which is impartial in character and conducted without adverse distinction.

48. Accountability is central to sustainable peace. I reiterate my call for the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic to be referred to the International Criminal Court. I also call upon all States, all parties to the conflict, civil society and the United Nations system as a whole to cooperate fully with the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011.

49. The conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic has caused and continues to cause immeasurable suffering to millions of civilians. It is imperative to see suffering lessened through the provision of immediate life-saving assistance for all in need. This is the least that should be done, yet every month far fewer are reached than is needed. At the same time, we must remain focused on a sustainable solution to end the conflict. This can be achieved only through a political agreement, guided by Security Council resolution 2254 (2015) and the Geneva Communique of 30 June 2012. In that regard, I welcome the announcement by my Special Envoy, Staffan de Mistura, of the eighth round of intra-Syrian negotiations, to be held in Geneva on 28 November. I echo his call on all parties to negotiate in good faith and with real intent to end this conflict. Ultimately, an inclusive political process convened under the auspices of the United Nations, together with the backing of the international community, is the only course that can provide a lasting solution to the Syrian conflict and bring an end to the tremendous suffering of the Syrian people.

Annex

Incidents affecting civilians recorded by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in October 2017*

Rif Dimashq and Damascus Governorates

- On 2 October, a twin suicide attack was carried out on a police station in the southern Damascus neighbourhood of Maydan, allegedly killing at least 15 men. ISIL reportedly claimed responsibility shortly after the incident.
- On 6 October, residential areas of Duma were simultaneously hit by airstrikes and ground-based strikes, reportedly killing four civilians (including a child), injuring at least 10 others and severely damaging a medical facility.
- On 11 October, two suicide attackers attempted to storm a police station on Khalid Ibn Al-Walid Street in Damascus and detonated their explosives at the main entrance, reportedly killing two men. ISIL allegedly claimed responsibility for the attack.
- On 15 October, ground-based strikes hit Qishla Street and other areas in the old city of Damascus. At least three civilians were allegedly killed and five others injured.
- On 15 October, a female teacher was reportedly killed in Saqba when a ground-based strike hit a bus stop in the main street connecting Failaq Ar-Rahman-controlled Saqba to Kafr Batna.
- On 16 October, ground-based strikes in the vicinity of a school in Kafr Batna, allegedly killed a female teacher and her daughter and injuring at least three other civilians.
- On 16 October, airstrikes hit a residential area in opposition-held Hazzah and partly destroyed a building, allegedly killing a girl and her grandmother.
- On 20 October, a series of ground-based strikes hit residential areas of Kafr Batna, reportedly killing a 9-year-old boy and injuring at least 17 other civilians, including women and children.
- On 26 October, ground-based strikes hit residential areas in Duma allegedly killing six civilians, including a woman and a boy, and wounding at least 10 other civilians.
- On 26 October, ground-based strikes hit a residential and market area in Saqba, reportedly killing two civilians employed as cleaners by the de facto local authorities.
- On 29 October, two successive ground-based strikes hit residential areas of Kafr Batna in the vicinity of a kindergarten, causing a state of panic among children in the kindergarten and local inhabitants, but reportedly causing no severe casualties.

* In line with Security Council resolution 2258 (2015), the present description of developments on the ground and the incidents that occurred during the month that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has been able to corroborate, relates to compliance with Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014) by all parties in the Syrian Arab Republic. The information is provided without prejudice to the work of the Task Force on the Cessation of the International Syria Support Group. The reporting is not a comprehensive listing of all violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of international human rights law that took place in the Syrian Arab Republic during the reporting period.

- On 29 October, four ground-based strikes reportedly hit a residential area in Hamuriyah, killing at least eight civilians, including three women. Two journalists reportedly heading to the kindergarten in Kafr Batna were hit by one of the strikes; one of them was allegedly killed outright while the other was transported to a medical facility in the area.

- On 29 October, ground-based strikes hit residential areas of Saqba, reportedly killing three civilians including a boy, and injuring an unknown number of other civilians.

- On 31 October, a ground-based strike hit the entrance of a primary school in Jisrayn, reportedly killing four boys and one adult civilian, in addition injuring an unknown number of others, including several children. The strike occurred at the moment when children were leaving school, in accordance with the schedule followed in the area.

- On 31 October, two ground-based strikes hit residential areas in Misraba. One of the strikes fell in the vicinity of a school and reportedly killed three civilians, including a girl, a boy and his father, and injured an unknown number civilians.

Dar'a and Suwayda' Governorates

- On 7 October, ground-based strikes hit opposition-controlled Mismiyah city north-east of Dar'a Governorate, reportedly killing a civilian man, his wife and their son, who were all displaced from the Rural Damascus town of Duma.

- On 10 October, a male civilian was allegedly hit and killed by gunfire in Eastern Ghariyah as clashes between Government forces and their allies, and Southern Front-linked armed opposition groups occurred in the vicinity of the Dar'a Damascus highway.

- On 13 October, ground-based strikes hit residential areas of Government-controlled Dar'a al-Mahattah in Dar'a city, reportedly killing three civilian men, including one displaced from opposition-controlled Dar'a al-Balad.

- On 14 October, ground-based strikes hit residential areas in Dar'a al-Balad and reportedly killed a boy and injured at least two civilians.

- On 19 October, ground-based strikes hit opposition-controlled Harah, allegedly killing a 12-year-old boy and a civilian woman.

- On 28 October, a civilian woman reportedly died as a result of her injuries after being hit by unidentified airstrikes carried out on Saham al-Jawlan on 23 October.

Aleppo Governorate

- On 16 October, unknown fighters captured 11 male civilians from their houses in Tall Rif'at town in northern Aleppo Governorate. The whereabouts of those civilians remain unknown.

Idlib Governorate

- On the morning of 6 October, airstrikes hit residential areas in the Eastern neighbourhood of Khan Shaykhun city, reportedly killing a 13-year-old boy and injuring an elderly man and a girl.

- On 7 October, airstrikes hit residential areas in the Eastern neighbourhood of Khan Shaykhun city and allegedly killed a woman and another civilian from the same family and injured two others, one of them a woman.

- On 9 October, airstrikes hit residential areas in the Western neighbourhood of Khan Shaykhun city, reportedly severely injuring five civilians, including one woman.
- On 11 October, a girl was allegedly killed when an improvised explosive device detonated near a Hay'at Tahrir Al-Sham checkpoint in a residential area of Armanaz town, and at least three other civilians, including a woman, were injured. The incident also reportedly killed at least six Hay'at Tahrir Al-Sham fighters.
- On 28 October, airstrikes hit residential areas in Sinjar, reportedly killing a male civilian and his son and injuring another boy. The victims were all from the same family.

Hama Governorate

- On the morning of 4 October, ground-based strikes hit residential areas in Kafr Zayta city and reportedly killed three male civilians.
- On 16 October, ground-based strikes hit agricultural lands in Lataminah, allegedly killing a male civilian and his three-year-old son and severely injuring another male civilian from the same family.

Homs Governorate

- On 14 October, ground-based strikes hit residential areas of opposition-controlled Ghantu in northern rural Homs, reportedly killing a boy and injuring at least six other civilians including women and children.
- On 16 October, ground-based strikes hit residential areas in opposition-controlled Talbisah city and reportedly killed a civilian woman and injured at least four other civilians.
- On 26 October, ground-based strikes hit residential areas of opposition-controlled Rastan in northern Homs, reportedly killing a male civilian and two boys from the same family, including a father and his son. The strikes also injured a number of other civilians.

Dayr al-Zawr Governorate

- On 1 October, airstrikes hit several residential areas near a hospital and Masriyah roundabout in ISIL-controlled Albu Kamal city in eastern Dayr al-Zawr Governorate. At least nine civilians from two families, including two women and a girl, were reportedly killed and nine other civilians injured. In its public reporting, the United States-led coalition stated that, on the same day, it had conducted three strikes destroying an ISIL wellhead and engaging two tactical units near Albu Kamal.
- On 1 October, airstrikes hit a residential area in the vicinity of a hospital behind Arba'in Street in Mayadin city, allegedly killing at least two male civilians and injuring another civilian.
- On 4 October, airstrikes in ISIL-held Asharah city in eastern Dayr al-Zawr hit water crossings while civilians were reportedly trying to cross the river, allegedly killing at least 15 civilians, including one woman and five boys. Civilians are understood to use the point to cross from Asharah towards Darnaj town as the majority of the bridges in the area have been destroyed.
- On 5 October, ground-based strikes hit residential areas of the Government-controlled Qusur neighbourhood in Dayr al-Zawr city, allegedly killing nine

civilians, including three women and three boys. The United States-led coalition publicly reported that on the same day, it conducted two strikes and engaged an ISIL tactical unit and destroyed two improvised explosive devices and a logistics node near Dayr al-Zawr.

- On 11 October, airstrikes hit residential areas near Omar Ibn Al-Khattab mosque in the centre of Albu Kamal city, reportedly killing at least 13 civilians, including five women and six children from one family. In its public reporting, the United States-led coalition stated that, on the same day near Albu Kamal, it had conducted a strike engaging an ISIL tactical unit and destroying an ISIL vehicle.

- On 11 October, airstrikes hit water crossings between Qurayya city and Tayyani town on the Euphrates River in eastern Dayr al-Zawr while civilians were reportedly trying to cross and allegedly killed 11 civilians, including two women, one girl and two boys.

- On 17 October, airstrikes hit a group of commercial vehicles near Masriyah roundabout close to Suwa'iyyah Bridge in Albu Kamal city, and reportedly killed at least eight civilians: three Iraqi refugees, four displaced civilians from Dayr al-Zawr city and one civilian from Albu Kamal. The United States-led coalition publicly reported that on the same day, coalition military forces had conducted two strikes consisting of three engagements against ISIL targets near Albu Kamal. The strikes reportedly engaged an ISIL tactical unit and destroyed two vehicle-borne-bomb factories and an ISIL headquarters.

Raqqah Governorate

- On 3 October, airstrikes hit close to water wells in ISIL-controlled Shuhada' neighbourhood in northern Raqqah city and allegedly killed at least 14 civilians, including six women and one girl, and injured no less than 11 other civilians. The civilians — many of them internally displaced persons from Tadmur in Homs Governorate — reportedly gathered around the wells to get water. On the same day, airstrikes hit a residential building on Marandiyah Street in the Badu neighbourhood of Raqqah city and allegedly killed 16 civilians, including three women and 11 children. On 3 October, at least 15 civilians from one family were reportedly killed when airstrikes and ground-based strikes hit residential areas of the ISIL-held Tawasi'iyah neighbourhood in Raqqah city. The airstrikes hit a building near Hadiqah al-Mururiyah area which was used by the civilians as a shelter. In its public reporting, the United States-led coalition stated that on 3 October near Raqqah, it conducted 35 strikes, which engaged 16 ISIL tactical units.

- On 4 October, ISIL-controlled Badu neighbourhood in Raqqah city was hit with airstrikes and ground-based strikes that allegedly killed at least seven civilians, including two women and four children. The United States-led coalition publicly reported that, on the same day near Raqqah, it had conducted 51 strikes engaging 17 ISIL tactical units.

- On 11 October, airstrikes hit a residential building in the heart of Raqqah city and reportedly killed 27 civilians, including 15 women and seven children (two boys and five girls). In its public reporting, the United States-led coalition stated that, near Raqqah on the same day, it conducted 32 strikes engaging three ISIL tactical units.

- At noon on 12 October, airstrikes hit residential areas in Badu neighbourhood in Raqqah city and allegedly killed at least seven civilians, including one woman and a child. The United States-led coalition publicly reported that, on

the same day near Raqqah, it conducted 29 strikes and engaged nine ISIL tactical units.

- On 14 October, Badu neighbourhood in Raqqah city was hit with airstrikes that reportedly killed eight civilians.

Hasakah Governorate

- On 12 October, a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device was detonated close to a Kurdish militia-controlled checkpoint in Abu Fas village at the border of Hasakah and Dayr al-Zawr Governorates, and reportedly killed at least 17 civilians, including at least two women and four children. The majority of those killed were believed to be displaced persons from Dayr al-Zawr.

- On 25 October, Kurdish fighters raided the makeshift Al-Sadd internally displaced person camp located in Arish village in southern Hasakah Governorate. They searched the cell phones of all the internally displaced persons in the camp, allegedly looking for those who sent pictures and documented violations taking place inside the camp.